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Thornthwaite sc.

M^{rs} SIDDONS as MATILDA.

When discovered kneeling at the Altar, decorated with the
 Funeral Trophies of Saint Valori.



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[Faint, illegible handwritten text, possibly a signature or a note.]

B. R. M. M. C. A. T. R. E.

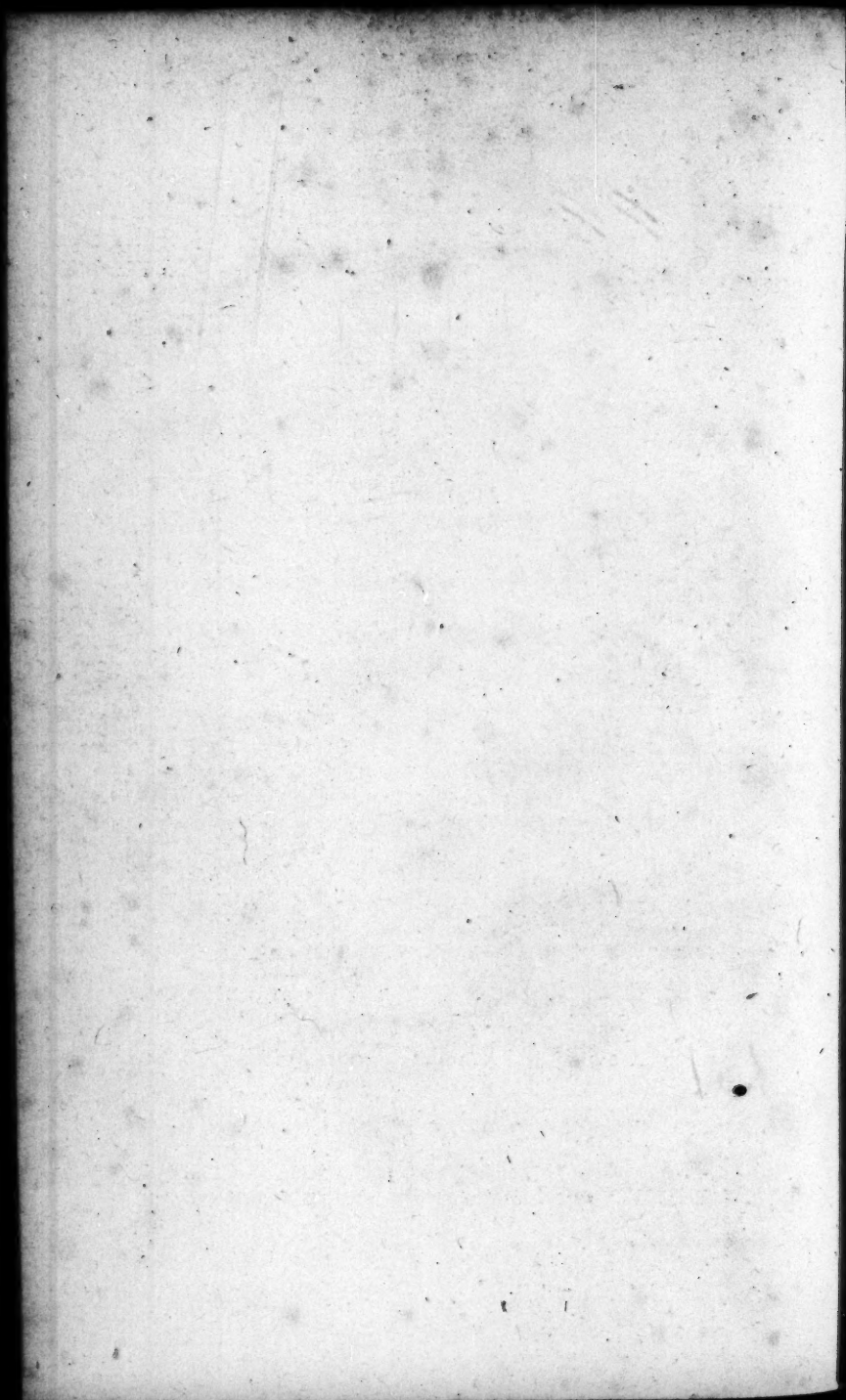


THE CARMELITE.

Mon. — Oh! don't thou love thy son?

Mat. — Love thee! O Heaven!

Scene I.



THE
CARMELITE. (2)

A
TRAGEDY,
BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND, Esq.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,
By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

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MDCXC1.

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CARMELITE

TRAGEDY

BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED

AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, DUBLIN

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THE THEATRE ROYAL, DUBLIN

RECEIVED FROM THE THEATRE ROYAL

By Thomas J. H. H. H.

THE THEATRE ROYAL, DUBLIN

1841

THE THEATRE ROYAL, DUBLIN

THE THEATRE ROYAL, DUBLIN

THE THEATRE ROYAL, DUBLIN

TO
MRS. SIDDONS.

MADAM,

I Cannot commit this Tragedy to the press without availing myself of the opportunity to acknowledge the support you gave it on the stage. I felt myself under the weight of a responsibility during its trial before the public, which made those moments extremely anxious; for had I been adjudged guilty of misemploying your talents, I must have sunk under the sentence without appeal, conscious of having conceived the fable, and addressed every feature and expression of the prevailing character, professedly to you: in short, there was no possible shelter for self-prejudice (had that been amongst my failings) to resort to, where all the performers stood so ably in the scene, and where the spectacle was so fully furnished by the liberality of the Proprietors, that I can honestly declare my endeavours, antecedent to the exhibition, had not been employed to urge their spirit to expence, but, on the contrary, to restrain it.

I am deeply grateful to a generous and candid Audience for their reception of this Tragedy; and though I am not to learn how much of their applause

rests personally with you and your associates in the cast, I am no less penetrated with a sense of the favours I am to transfer to others, than of those which I may be permitted to retain to myself.

The character of our Drama, in its best examples, is so close to Nature, that you, madam, who are apt to give so perfect a reflection of her image, seem born for the elevation of the British stage. The Author, who shall write for you, must copy from no other model but Nature; every thing must be addressed to the spectator's heart, and of course must flow from his own; artificial situations, tricking incidents, and studied declamations, must be thrown aside where you are to appear; it will not be his aim to make you loquacious in the scene, because he has such fine recitation to resort to, nor will he call you out into starts and attitudes, merely because he has a form so striking to display at his command; glittering passages, and traps for plaudits will be beneath his attention; he will lead simplicity in his hand, and keep sublimity in his eye.

To such a Poet may I now consign you!—Yet before I make over so valuable a conveyance, let me apprise him of the extent of his good fortune; and that it is not only in the public representation of his scenes where he will find your importance, but in every stage of the business preparatory to their exhi-

bition. To add one voice to a multitude is a small tribute to your talents; but to bear testimony to your zeal, diligence, and punctuality in all those duties of your profession, which, though of equal moment, are of less notoriety, falls first to my lot; and if my successor shall feel these offices as sensibly as I do, he will acknowledge stronger reasons to esteem you for the good qualities originating with yourself, than for the brilliant gifts which you derive from nature.

Proceed in your course, and depend upon a generous Public. It would be living to an evil purpose indeed, if it were for no other purpose but to depress them we live with; and your contemporaries will not fail to see how much it is their concern to foster and protect a genius, which contributes to render their own times and their own country superior to all others.

I have the honour to be,

MADAM,

Your most faithful and

Most obedient Servant,

RICH. CUMBERLAND.

London, Dec. 6, 1784.

PROLOGUE.

BY THE AUTHOR.

Spoken by Mr. PALMER.

*OLD Drury's dock presents a launch this night,
New from the keel, (fair speed The Carmelite!)
True British-built, and from the Tragic slip;
She mounts great guns—tho' not a first-rate ship:
A gallant Knight commands, of ancient fame
And Norman blood, St. Valori his name;
On his main-top the Christian Cross he bears,
From Holy Land he comes, and Pagan wars:
Twenty long years his lady mourns him dead,
And bathes with faithful tears a widow'd bed;
Our scene presents him shipwreck'd on her coast—
No sign, we hope, our venture will be lost.*

*Yet bold the Bard, to mount ambition's wave,
And launch his wit upon a wat'ry grave;
Sharp Critic rocks beneath him lie in wait,
And envious quicksands bar the Muse's strait;
Wild o'er his head Detraction's billows break,
Doubt chills his heart, and terror pales his cheek:
Hungry and faint, what cordials can he bring
From the cold nymph of the Pierian spring?*

*What stores collect from bare Parnassus' head,
Where blooms no vineyard, where no beeves are fed?
And great Apollo's laurels, which impart
Fame to his head, are famine to his heart.—*

*Yet on he toils, and eager bends his eyes,
Where Fame's bright temple glitters to the skies.
Ah, sirs, 'tis easy work, to sit on shore,
And tutor him who tugs the labouring oar :
Whilst he amidst the surging ocean steers,
Now here, now there, as fashion's current veers :
Rouse, rouse for his protection ! you, who sit
Rang'd in deep phalanx, arbiters of wit !
And you aloft there, keep your beacon bright,
Oh, make your Eddy-stone shew forth its light ;
So shall our bard steer so its friendly blaze,
And anchor in the haven of your praise.*

DRURY-LANE

Dramatis Personae.

DRURY - LANE.

Men.

St. VALORI <i>the</i> Carmelite,	-	-	Mr. Smith.
Lord HILDEBRAND,	-	-	Mr. Palmer.
Lord De COURCI,	-	-	Mr. Aickin:
MONTGOMERI,	-	-	Mr. Kemble.
GYFFORD,	-	-	Mr. Packer.
FITZ-ALLAN,	-	-	Mr. Phillimore.
RAYMOND,	-	-	Mr. Faucett.

Woman.

MATILDA, <i>the</i> lady of St. Valori,	-	-	Mrs. Siddons.
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Attendants, &c.

Time, that of the Representation.



THE
CARMELITE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A rocky Shore, with a View of the Sea, at Break of Day.

Enter FITZ-ALLAN and RAYMOND meeting.

Raymond.

WELL met, Fitz-Allan; what's the time of day?

Fitz-All. Broad morning by the hour.

Ray. Sleeps the sun yet?

Or has the stormy south, that howls so loud,
Blown out his untrimm'd lamp, and left us here
To be witch-ridden by this hag of night,
Out of time's natural course?

Fitz-All. Methinks the winds,
Which peal'd like thunder thro' Glendarlock's towers,
Have lower'd their note a pitch; the flecker'd clouds,
Lifting their misty curtain in the east,
Unmask the weeping day.

Enter MONTGOMERI hastily.

Mont. Oh, are you men ?
Have you less mercy than the winds and waves,
That you stand here aloof ?

Fitz-All. Why, what has chanc'd ?

Mont. A noble vessel breaks upon the rocks,
That jut from old Dunnose's rugged base ;
And as the floating fragments drive ashore
Our plund'ring islanders (convert their hearts,
Holy St. Michael!) dash the drowning wretches
From the poor wreck they cling to, and engulph them
Quick in the boiling waves: by Heav'n that made me,
I cou'd forswear my nature, when I see
Man so degenerate!

Ray. Lo! we are ready:
Lead to the beach.

Mont. Alas! 'tis now too late:
I had not left it but that all was lost:
The element had mercy; man had none.
Two I have sav'd; the one a Carmelite,
Noble the other in his mien and habit;
I left them in the outskirts of the grove;
Let us go forth, my friends, and bring them in:
You to that quarter, I to this—Away! [*Exeunt severally.*]

Enter Lord HILDEBRAND and St. VALORI.

St.Val. Bear up, Lord Hildebrand! there's hope in
view.

See'st thou yon turrets, that o'er top the wood?
There we may shelter from the storm, and men
More merciless than rocks and winds, that wreck'd
Our strong-ribb'd galley in the foaming surge.

Hild. I see the towers you point at, but I fear
My limbs will fail their burden ere we reach them.
Let me lie down beneath these oaks, and die.

St. Val. If thus you shake with the soul's ague, fear,
Back to the sea, and seek the death you fled from;
Make not a coward's grave on English ground;
Your life is stak'd, your gauntlet is exchange'd,
Each drop of blood about you is in pledge
To meet the champion of St. Valori,
A lady's champion in King Henry's lists:
There fight; or, if you needs must die, die there;
Fall, as a Norman knight shou'd fall, in arms.

Hild. Father, your words accord not with your
weeds.

St. Val. Our ancestors were holy men, and they
Ordain'd the combat, as the test of truth;
Let them who made the law defend the law,
Our part is to obey it.—Hark! who comes?
The islanders will be upon us.—Stand!

Enter FITZ-ALLAN and RAYMOND.

Fitz-All. What ho! Montgomeri!—the men are
found.

St. Val. Inhuman Englishmen! Will you destroy
Your brethren? We are Normans.—

Enter MONTGOMERI.

Mont. Ye are men,
Let that suffice; we are no savages.

St. Val. 'Tis the brave youth who sav'd us.

Mont. Heav'n hath sav'd you,
To Heav'n give thanks, O men redeem'd from
death:

All else have perish'd!—'Tis a barbarous coast.

St. Val. How is your island nam'd?

Mont. The Isle of Wight.

St. Val. Alas! that isle so fair should prove so
fatal!—

And you our benefactor, by what name
Shall we record you in our prayers?

Mont. I am call'd
Montgomeri.

St. Val. 'Twill be our grateful office,
Generous Montgomeri, to make suit to Heaven
To bless, reward, and from distress like ours
Protect you ever.

Mont. Now declare thyself,
And this thy mournful friend, whom grief makes
dumb,
Say who he is.

Hild. A wretch without a name.

St. Val. A gentleman of Normandy he is,
One who has seen good days.—'Tis now no time
To tell you further: he has wounds about him,

And bruises dealt him on the craggy beach,
That cry for charity.—Whose is that castle?

Mont. A lady's, whom we serve, of Norman birth;

St. Val. Then lead us to her gates, for we are Nor-
mans;

Poor helpless men, fainting with want of food
And over-watching: tedious nights and days
We struggled with the storm: the greedy deep
Has swallow'd up our ship, our friends, our all,
And left us to your mercy. Sure your lady,
Who owns so fair a mansion, owns withal
A heart to give us welcome.—You are silent.

Fitz-All. To save you, and supply your pressing
wants

With food and raiment, and what else you need,
We promise, nothing doubting: more than this
Stands not within our privilege—no stranger
Enters her castle.

St. Val. Wherefore this exclusion?
What can she fear from us?

Fitz-All. Ask not a reason;
We question not her orders, but obey them.

St. Val. Then lay us down before her castle-
gates,

And let us die: inhospitable gates!
Your roofs shall echo with our famish'd shrieks.—
A Norman she! impossible: our wolves
Have hearts more pitiful.

Mont. Your saints in bliss,
Your calendar of martyrs does not own

A soul more pure, a virtue more sublime:
Her very name will strike defamers dumb.

St. Val. Speak it.

Mont. Saint Valori.

St. Val. Uphold me, Heaven!

The ways of Providence are full of wonder,
And all its works are mercy.—How now, sir!
Will you betray yourself? what shakes you thus?

Hild. I sicken at the heart: let me go hence,
And make myself a grave.

St. Val. Be patient: stay!—

And hath your lady here consum'd her youth
In pensive solitude? Twenty long years,
And still a widow!

Mont. Still a mournful widow.

St. Val. Hath she such sorrows of her own, and yet
No heart to pity ours? It cannot be:
I'll not believe but she will take us in:
And comfort her poor countrymen.

Mont. Forbid it, Heav'n,
That misery thus should plead, and no friend found
To speak in its behalf!—I'll move her for you.

St. Val. The Mother of our Lord reward you for it!
'Twill be a Christian deed.

Fitz-All. Montgomeri, turn;
Have you your senses? the attempt is madness.

Ray. Where is the man, native or foreigner,
(Inmates excepted) ever pass'd her doors?—
Who dares to ask it?

Mont. I; Montgomeri.

Ray. So dare not I.

Fitz-All. Nor I: success attend you!
But share the attempt I dare not—so farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

Mont. Farewell to both!—Strangers, be not dismay'd,
I'll soon return; the place will be your safeguard.

[*Exit Mont.*]

St. Val. Lord Hildebrand, stand not aghast: you
see

The youth is confident: look up and live!

Hild. By my soul's penitence, I'd rather die
Unpitied, starv'd, and to her castle dogs
Bequeath my untomb'd carcase, than receive
Life from her hands; the widow of Saint Valori!
That brave heroic champion of the Cross,
Whom, from the holy wars returning home,
Within the rugged Pyrenæan pass—

St. Val. No more of that: I have your full confession;

You slew Saint Valori, and now his widow
Provokes you by her champion to defend
The rights you seiz'd, the title you inherit,
And hold by bloody charter.—What's your fear?
Saint Valori's dead; he cannot rise again,
And beard you in the lists.

Hild. Oh, that he could!
So I were not a murderer.

St. Val. Grant you slew him,
Twenty long years have staunch'd the bleeding wound

Of him you slew, and laid his angry ghost.
Have you not rear'd his stately tomb, endow'd
The abbey of Saint Valori, and purchas'd
Perpetual masses to reclaim his soul
From purgatory's bondage? Have you faith
In absolution's power, and do you doubt
If yet atonement's made?

Hild. I do perceive

The hand of Heav'n hangs o'er me and my house:
Why am I childless else? seven sons swept off
To their untimely graves; their wretched mother
By her own hand in raging phrenzy died;
And last behold me here, forlorn, abandon'd,
At life's last hour, before her surly gate,
Deaf to my hungry cries: and shall we rank
Such judgments in the casual course of things?
To me 'tis palpable that heav'nly justice
Puts nature by, and to the swelling sum
Of my uncancell'd crimes adds all the lives
Of them who sunk this morning.

St. Val. What know'st thou,

Blind or obdurate man? Shall we despond,
On whom the light of this deliverance shines?
No, let us boldly follow: there's a voice
Augurs within me wondrous things, and new,
Now on the moment's point: for of a certain
I know this lady shall set wide her gates
To give us joyful welcome: sable weeds
Shall turn to bridal robes, and joy shall ring
Thro' all her festive mansion, where of late

Deep groans and doleful lamentations howl'd.
Therefore no more ; from my prophetic lips
Receive Heaven's mandate—and behold 'tis here !

Enter MONTGOMERI.

Mont. Health to your hopes, that were but now so
sick !

Ye sons of sadness, cast off your despair ;
Heav'n has vouchsaf'd deliverance, and sends
Its angel messenger in person to you.

St. Val. Then let me kneel, and hail the heav'nly
vision !

[*Kneels.*

Enter the Lady of SAINT VALORI.

To Him, to Him alone, who by the hand
Leads his unseeing creatures thro' the vale
Of sorrow, to the day-spring of their hope,
Be praise and adoration !—A poor monk, [*Rising.*
Who has trod many a weary league, as far
As there was Christian ground to carry him,
Asks for himself, and for this mournful man,
Newly escap'd from shipwreck, food and rest,
Warmth, and the shelter of your peaceful roof.

Mat. Are ye of Normandy ?

St. Val. We are of Normandy :
But were we not your countrymen, distress
Like ours wou'd make us so. Two of your servants
Spoke harshly, and had thrust us from your gates
But for this charitable youth.

Mat. Alas !

I am a helpless solitary woman,
A widow, who have lost—O God! O God!
'Twill turn my brain to speak of what I've lost:
It is amongst the lightest of my griefs
That I have lost myself.

St. Val. Thyself!

Mat. My senses:

At best they are but half my own, sometimes
I am bereft of all. Therefore I lead
On this lone coast a melancholy life,
And shut my gate, but not my charity,
Against the stranger.

St. Val. Oh, support me, Heaven!
'Tis she, 'tis she! that woe-tun'd voice is hers;
Those eyes, that cast their pale and waining fires
With such a melting languor thro' my soul,
Those eyes are hers and sorrow's.—Heart, be still!
She speaks again.

Mat. You shall have food and clothing;
I'll bring you medicines for your bruised wounds.
What else you need, declare.

St. Val. If I speak now,
She cannot bear it; it will turn her brain.
What shall I say?—We are your countrymen—
Oh my full heart! Oh anguish to dissemble!

Mat. Nay, if you weep—

St. Val. Let us but touch your altar:
We are the sole sad relics of the wreck.
Let us but kneel and offer up one prayer
For our soul's peace, then turn us forth to die.

Mat. Mercy forbid it ! Oh, approach and enter
If you can weep, we will converse whole days,
And speak no other language ; we will sit,
Like fountain statues, face to face oppos'd,
And each to other tell our griefs in tears,
Yet neither utter word.—Pray you, pass on ;
I had not been thus strict, but that I hear
Lord Hildebrand is on the seas : I hope
You are not of his friends.

Hild. Death to my heart !

O father Carmelite, I must have leave——

St. Val. On your salvation, peace !

Mat. What wou'd he say ?

St. Val. His brain begins to turn : take him away.

I pray you, lead him hence. [Mont. leads off Hild.

Mat. Alas ! I pity him.

Why dost thou stay behind ?—Whence that emotion ?
What wou'dst thou more ?

St. Val. I wou'd invoke a blessing,
But that each sainted spirit in the skies
Will be thy better advocate.

Mat. Remember,
When you converse with Heav'n, there is a wretch
Who will be glad of any good man's prayers.—
Farewell.

St. Val. Oh, tell me, have you then endur'd
Twenty long years of mournful widowhood ?

Mat. They say 'tis twenty years ago he died ;
I cannot speak of time : it may be so ;
Yet I shou'd think 'twas yesterday.

St. Val. I saw you——

Mat. You saw me ! When ?

St. Val. When you did wed your lord.——

The paragon of all this world you was.

Grief has gone o'er you like a wintry cloud.——

You've heard this voice before.

Mat. I think I have :

It gives a painful sense of former days :

I've heard such voices in my dreams ; sometimes

Convers'd with them all night ; but then they told me

My senses wander'd.—Pray you, do not harm me ;

Leave me, good Monk ; indeed I know you not.

St. Val. I wore no monkish cowl in that gay hour

When you wore bridal white. On Pagan ground,

Beneath the banner of the Christian Cross,

Faithful I fought ; I was God's soldier then,

Tho' now his peaceful servant.

Mat. You have fought

Under the Christian Cross !—You shake my brain.

St. Val. Peace to your thoughts ! I will no farther
move you :

Shall I not lead you hence ?

Mat. Stand off ; stand off !

The murderer of Saint Valori is abroad ;

The bloody Hildebrand is on the seas.—

Rise, rise, ye waves ! blow from all points, ye winds,

And whelm th' accursed plank that wafts him over

In fathomless perdition !—Let him sink,

He and his hateful crew ! let none escape,

Not one ; or if one, let him only breathe

To tell his tale, and die!—Away! begone!
You've made me mad.

St. Val. I was Saint Valori's friend:
He never yet bled with the battle's wound,
But I shed drop for drop: when o'er the sands
Of sultry Palestine with panting heart
He march'd, my panting heart with his kept time,
And number'd throb for throb.

Mat. Where are my people?
What ho! Montgomeri! Lead, lead me hence.

Enter MONTGOMERI hastily, with GYFFORD.

Give me thine arm! support me! Oh, 'tis well,
To horse, to horse!—I have a champion now,
Whose hand, heart, soul are mine, and mine are his;
One who has valour to assert my cause,
And worth to wear the honours he defends.

Mont. What hast thou done, old man?

Gyf. Stay not to question;
Look to the lady: leave the Monk with me.

Mat. Come, let us hence; I do not live without,
thee. *[Exit with Montgomeri.]*

St. Val. Amazement!—Speak, what kindred, what
affection,

What passion binds her to that youth?—Resolve me,
Who and what is he?

Gyf. You are curious, father.
Who he may be I know not; what he was
I well remember.

St. Val. What was he?

Gyf. Her page;
A menial thing, no better than myself.

St. Val. Heavens! can it be? Will she so far descend

From her great name, to wanton with her page?
Saw you the look she gave him?

Gyf. I did see it.

St. Val. It seem'd as tho' his eyes had magic in them,

That charm'd away her madness.—Hah! you sigh:
What means that pensive movement of your head?
Answer!

Gyf. Good father, question me no more.
Fortune can level all things in this world,
Pull down the mighty, and exalt the mean:
But you and I methinks have outliv'd wonders.—
Now to the castle! Shut both ears and eyes:
Hear without noting; see, but not observe. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

An Apartment in MATILDA's Castle. Enter SAINT VALORI and GYFFORD.

Gyfford.

WITH awful wonder I survey and hear you,
Whilst thro' the veil of that disguiseful habit,
Thro' all the changes time and toil have wrought

In that once-noble visage, I scarce trace
The lineaments of my most honour'd lord.

St. Val. Awake from this surprise, and hear me,
Gyfford.

I am no spectre, but thy living master :
Wounded and breathless on the ground I lay,
Welt'ring in blood : th' assassins fled and left me ;
There I had soon expir'd, but that a company
Of merchants, journeying from Venice, found me,
And charitably staunch'd my bleeding wounds.
To their own homes they bore me : heal'd, restor'd,
In a Venetian galley I embark'd,
And sail'd for Genoa ; but, ere we reach'd
Our destin'd port, a Saracen assail'd
And master'd our weak crew.—To tell the tale
Of my captivity, escape, return,
Would ask more leisure, and a mind at ease.

Gyf. But why does brave Saint Valori appear
A bearded Carmelite ?

St. Val. This holy habit
Thro' a long course of dangerous pilgrimage
Has been my saving passport : thus attir'd,
I reach'd my native castle, found it lorded
By the usurper Hildebrand ; with zeal
I burn'd to call my faithful people round me,
And throw off my disguise ; this I had done,
But straight arriv'd a herald from King Henry
To warn him to the lists against the champion
Of my supposed widow : the pale coward

Shrunk, yet obey'd the summons. The thought
struck me

To join his train, and in my sovereign's presence,
At the last trumpet's signal, to come forth
Before the king, the lords, and armed knights,
And strike confusion to the caitiff's soul.—
The rest needs no relation.

Gyf. 'Tis resolv'd

To-morrow for Southampton we depart;
There Henry keeps his court.

St. Val. Why then, to-morrow
Truth and the morning sun shall rise together,
And this black night of doubt shall be dispell'd:
Till then lock fast my secret in thy heart,
And know me for none other than I seem.
Lo, where they come! Yet, yet I will be patient;
Time will bring all things forth.—*Gyfford*, with-
draw. [Exeunt.

Enter MATILDA and MONTGOMERI.

Mat. I think he said he was my husband's friend;
If so I've been too harsh: reason forsook me,
For he did speak of things that rent my heart:
But let that pass.—Dost thou observe, *Montgomeri*?

Mont. With fix'd attention and devoted heart
I hear, and note your pleasure.

Mat. I am calm,
Thou seest I am, and not about to speak,
As sometimes, when my thoughts obey no order;
Therefore I pray thee mark.—Thou must have noted

With what a tenderness I've train'd thee up
From helpless infancy to blooming manhood :
Hast thou not noted this ?

Mont. I were most vile
Did I forget it.

Mat. I am sure thou dost not ;
For from the moment of thy birth till now
I've nurs'd thy opening virtues, mark'd their growth,
And gloried in the fruit of my adoption :
I've register'd each movement of thy soul,
And find it tun'd to honour's loftiest pitch,
To soft affection modell'd, and to love,
The harmony of nature : my best hopes
Are satisfied, and thou art all I pray'd for.

Mont. What thou hast made me that I truly am,
And will be ever : hands, head, heart are yours.

Mat. The day is coming on, the wish'd-for day
(After a night of twice ten tedious years)
At length is coming on : justice is granted ;
I go to Henry's court ; Lord Hildebrand
Is summon'd to the lists : and where's the man
To avenge the widow's cause ?

Mont. Where is the man !
And can you want a champion ?—Have I liv'd
The creature of your care, the orphan child
Of your adopting charity, the thing
Your plastic bounty fashion'd from the dust
Of abject misery ; and does my heart
Utter one drop of blood that is not yours,
One artery that does not beat for you ?

Mat. Know, then, I have a champion, noble, brave,
Heir of the great Saint Valori, my son.

Mont. What do I hear ? thy son !—Where has he
liv'd,

That I have never seen him ? never known
There was a living hero of the name ?
Oh, tell me where he is, that I may fly
To do him faithful service, on my knee
Brace on his glittering armour, bear his shield,
The glorious badge of his nobility,
And shout with triumph when his conqu'ring sword
Cleaves the assassin's crest.—Oh send me hence,
To hail his victory, or share his fall !

Mat. Thou art my son.

Mont. Merciful god ! thy son !

Mat. Thou art my son ; for thee alone I've liv'd,
For thee I have surviv'd a murder'd husband ;
For thee—but it would break thy filial heart
To hear what I have suffer'd ; madness seiz'd me,
And many a time (sweet Jesus intercede,
For I was not myself !) yes, many a time
In my soul's anguish, with my desperate hand
Rais'd for the stroke of death, a thought, a glance
Of thee, my child, has smote my shatter'd brain,
And stopt th' impending blow.

Mont. Oh, spare thyself,
Spare me the dread description !

Mat. Thou hast been
Thy mother's guardian angel : furious once,
In the mind's fever, to Glendarlock's roof

Madd'ning I rush'd ; there, from the giddy edge
Of the projecting battlements, below,
Measuring the fearful leap, I cast my eye :
Thy cherub form arrested it ; my child
Upon the pavement underneath my feet
Sported with infant playfulness ; my blood
Drove back upon my heart ; suspended, pois'd,
High hung in air, with outstretch'd arms I stood,
Pondering the dreadful deed ; thy fate prevail'd,
Nature flew up, and push'd me from the brink—
I shrunk, recoil'd, and started into reason.

Mont. Oh terrible to thought ! Oh pictur'd horror !
It pierces to my brain ; there's madness in it.

Mat. Yes, sorrow had o'erturn'd thy mother's brain :
I have been mad, my son ; and oftentimes
I find, alas ! all is not yet compos'd,
Sound, and at peace : it takes a world of time
To heal the wounds of reason ; even now,
When I would fain relate my life's sad story,
I cannot range my scatter'd thoughts in order
To tell it as I shou'd.—I pray thee, pardon me ;
I'll do my best to recollect myself,
If thou'lt be patient.

Mont. Patient ! Oh, thou sufferer !
Oh, thou maternal softness ! hear thy son,
Thus kneeling, bathing with his tears thy feet,
Swear to cast off each fond alluring thought,
The world, its honours, pleasures, and ambition ;
Here in this solitude to live with thee,
To thee alone devoted !

Mat. No, my son :

Tho' in this solitude I have conceal'd thee,
Ev'n from thyself conceal'd thee, to evade
A fell usurper's search, and stemm'd the tide
Of nature, gushing to a mother's heart ;
Still I have done it in the sacred hope
Of some auspicious hour, when I might shew thee
Bright as thy father's fame.

Mont. I own the cause,
And know how watchfully this hungry vulture
Has hover'd o'er thee on his felon wings.
Now I can solve this solitude around us,
Why thou hast built thine airey in this cragg,
And with a mother's care conceal'd thy young.

Mat. Another day, and then—meanwhile be secret;
Discovery now wou'd but disturb the house
From its sobriety, and mar the time
Of awful preparation.—Pass to-morrow !—
(Oh, all ye saints and angels, make it happy !)
Then, if thou com'st a living conqueror home,
This roof that still has echoed to my groans,
Shall ring with triumphs to Saint Valori's name :
But if——

Mont. Avert the sad, ill-omen'd word !
Thou shalt not name it: my great father's spirit
Swells in my bosom.—When my falchion gleams,
When the red cross darts terror from my shield,
The coward's heart shall quail, and Heaven's own
arm,
Ere mine can strike, shall lay the murderer low.

Mat. Thy father stirs within thee: hark! me-thinks

I hear the shrieks of his unburied ghost,
Screaming for vengeance.—Oh, support, defend me!
See where he gleams, he bursts upon my sight!
'Tis he! 'tis he! I clasp him to my heart;
My hero! my Saint Valori! my husband!

[*Embraces him.*]

Enter GYFFORD unseen; starts.

Gyf. Husband! oh fatal word! undone for ever!

Mat. I will array thee in a sacred suit,
The very armour my Saint Valori wore,
When in the single combat he unhors'd
And slew the Lord Fitz-Osborn. On that helm
High-plumed victory again shall stand,
And clap her wings exulting: from that shield
Vengeance with gorgon terrors shall look forth,
Awfully frowning.—Hah! what man art thou?

[*Discovering Gyfford.*]

Gyfford, what wouldst thou? wherefore this intrusion?

Gyf. A noble messenger from Henry's court
Is landed on the isle.

Mat. From the king, say'st thou?

Gyf. A runner of his train, whose utmost speed
Scarce distanc'd him an hour, is now arriv'd,
And gives this warning.

Mat. Did you not enquire
His master's name and title?

D ij

Gyf. Lord De Courci.

Mat. A generous and right noble lord he is :
Our Normandy boasts not a worthier baron,
Nor one affianc'd to our house more kindly :
Prepare to give him welcome.—Follow me.

[*Exit with Montgomeri.*]

Gyf. Yes, to destruction, for that way thou lead'st.
Husband!—her husband! her Saint Valori!
It cannot be.—Without the church's rites
Wed him she could not; to conceal those rites,
And wed by stealth, is here impossible.
What must I think?—That he is yet her husband
In meditation only, not in form.
Embracing too!—Oh mortal stab to honour!
O shame, shame, shame! that I shou'd live to see it.

Enter SAINT VALORI hastily.

St. Val. What hast thou seen? my mind is on the
rack :

Thou'st been in conference with thy lady; speak!—
If thou hast aught discover'd that affects
My honour, tell it.

Gyf. Hard task you enjoin;
Wou'd rather I were in my grave, than living
To utter what I've seen.

St. Val. Nay, no evasion.

Gyf. For the world's worth I would not with my
knowledge
Add or diminish of the truth one tittle.

St. Val. Gyfford, as thou shalt render up the truth
To the great Judge of hearts, say what thou know'st

Of my unhappy wife ; nor more nor less,
Give me the proof unvarnish'd.

Gyf. I surpris'd

Her and Montgomeri heart to heart embracing—

St. Val. Death ! Heart to heart embracing !—Wo-
man, woman !

Gyf. Fond and entranc'd within his arms she lay ;
Then with uplifted rapturous eyes exclaim'd,
' My hero ! my Saint Valori ! my husband !'

St. Val. Husband ! reflect.—Art sure she call'd
him husband ?

Gyf. If there be faith in man, I've spoke the truth.

St. Val. Why then the truth is out, and all is past :
I have no more to ask.

Gyf. Hear me with favour ;
I'll not abuse the licence of old age
And faithful service with too many words.

St. Val. What canst thou tell me ?—I have one
within

That is my monitor : not unprepar'd
I meet this fatal stroke, nor with revilings
Or impious curses (be my witness, Gyfford !)
Do I profane Heav'n's ear, tho' hard and painful
This bitter visitation of its wrath.

Gyf. Tho' to the sure conviction of my senses
I saw and heard what I have now reported,
Yet, circumstances weigh'd, I must believe,
As yet she is not wedded.

St. Val. Hah ! not wedded ?
Perish the man who dares to breathe a doubt

Of her unspotted chastity : not wedded !
Yet heart to heart embracing ! dreadful thought !—
Death in his direst shape approach me rather
Than that dishonest doubt !

Gyf. Wou'd I had died
Ere I had seen this day !

St. Val. Wretch that I am,
Why was I snatch'd from slaughter ? why deliver'd
From barbarous infidels ? why, when o'erwhelm'd
And sinking in th' oblivious deep, preserv'd,
Wash'd like a floating fragment to the shore,
Sav'd, nourish'd, ransom'd by the very hand
That cuts my heart asunder ; set in view
Of all my soul held dear ; and now, ev'n now,
As I reach'd forth my hand to seize the goal,
The resting-place and haven of my hope,
Dash'd in a moment back, and lost for ever ?

Gyf. Such is the will of Heaven ! For me, thus old,
And blighted with misfortune, I've no strength,
No root to bear against this second storm ;
There, where I fall, I'll make myself a grave.

St. Val. No more of this : you've heard my last
complaint ;

For I must soon put off these monkish weeds,
And what a consecrated knight should do,
Fitting the Cross he wears, that must be done.—
How stands your preparation for to-morrow ?
Will she depart ?

Gyf. I think she will ; for now
The Lord De Courci, from King Henry sent,

Bears courtly salutation to your lady,
With formal summons to her challenger.

St. Val. If it be that De Courci who was once
My youth's companion, and my bosom friend,
A more accomplished knight ne'er carried arms:
His coming is most timely.—Tell me, Gyfford,
Rememberest thou the armour which I wore
When in the lists I combated Fitz-Osborn?—
I gave it to my wife.

Gyf. I well remember.

St. Val. And hath she kept it, think'st thou?

Gyf. She hath kept it.

St. Val. 'Tis well; for that's the suit, the very suit,
Which I must wear to-morrow.

Gyf. Ah, my lord!

She hath bestow'd that armour on her champion;
And young Montgomeri with to-morrow's dawn
Starts, like another Phaeton, array'd
In substituted splendor: on his arm
He bears the shield of great Saint Valori,
A golden branch of palm, with this device,
'Another, and the same!'—'Twill be a pageant
Glittering as vanity and love can make it.

St. Val. Mournful as death.—My armour will she
take?

My shield, my banners, to array her champion?
Let them beware how they divide the spoil
Before the lion's kill'd.—Oh, fall of virtue!
Oh, all ye matron powers of modesty!
How time's revolving wheel wears down the edge

Of sharp affliction! Widows' sable weeds
Soon turn to grey; drop a few tears upon them,
And dusky grey is blanch'd to bridal white;
Then comes the sun, shines thro' the drizzling show'r,
And the gay rainbow glows in all its colours. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

*An Apartment in the Castle. Enter Lord HILDEBRAND
and Saint VALORI.*

Hildebrand.

AH, father Carmelite! where hast thou been?
Was it well done to leave thy wretched friend
To be devour'd by heart-consuming anguish?

St. Val. I left you to repose.

Hild. I know it not:

Sleep is my horror; then the furies rise;
Then pale Saint Valori appears before me:
Trembling I wake, cold damps bedew my limbs,
And my couch floats with tears.—Is this repose?

St. Val. No; yet it moves my wonder why your
conscience,

Mute for so many years, shou'd on the sudden
Break into voice, and cry so loud against you.—
I found you lull'd in a luxurious calm,
Feasting upon the spoils of him you stabb'd;
Your castle flow'd with revelry and wine,

And you the loudest of the sons of riot :
Where was your conscience then ?

Hild. With you it came ;
You are the father of my soul's repentance :
Your fascinating eye pervades my breast ;
Conscious, abash'd, uncover'd to the heart,
I stand before you—to your ear confide
Things unreveal'd to man. Now, as I see you,
Tho' in religion's peaceful garment cloth'd,
Saint Valori, methinks, appears before me,
Dreadful in arms, and braves me to the lists.

St. Val. Take food and rest, recruit your body's
strength,

And you'll forget these fears.

Hild. I'll die with famine
Before I'll eat the charitable bread
Of her I made a widow ; and for sleep,
I tell thee once again sleep is my horror.
Methought but now by shipwreck I was plung'd
Into the foaming ocean ; on the shore
Your figure stood with beck'ning hand outstretch'd
To snatch me from the waves ; cheer'd with the sight,
Thro' the white surf I struggled ; with strong arm
You rais'd me from the gulph ; joyful I ran
T' embrace my kind preserver—when at once
Off fell your habit, bright in arms you stood,
And with a voice of thunder cried aloud,
'Villain, avaunt ! I am Saint Valori !'
Then push'd me from the cliff : down, down, I fell,
Fathoms on fathoms deep, and sunk for ever !

St. Val. This was your dream.

Hild. Now hear my waking terrors.—

Rous'd by this dream I started; to the wall
Furious I rush'd, to dash my desperate brains :
Burst with the force, a secret door flew open,
Where full in view a lighted altar blaz'd
With holy tapers bright; around it hung
The funeral trophies of Saint Valori;
Red gleam'd the banner of the bloody Cross,
And on a tablet underneath was written,
' Pray for the peace of his departed soul !'
Upon my knees I dropt, and would have pray'd,
When soon, behold! the Lady Widow enter'd,
Led by the generous youth who sav'd our lives:
I rose, made low obeisance, and retir'd.

St. Val. You left them there.—Did all this pass
in silence?

Hild. All; not a word was spoken.

St. Val. Did you note

Her look, her action?—How did she dismiss you?
Abruptly, eagerly?

Hild. With matron grace,
Her hand thus gently waving, she dismiss'd me;
The other hand most lovingly was lock'd
In his on whom she lean'd.

St. Val. No more of this.

Hark! you are summon'd——Rouse from this de-
spair;

Shake off your lethargy!

[*Trumpet.*

Hild. What trumpet's that?

St. Val. To you, or to your challenger, the last ;
Death sounds the knell, and justice seals the doom.

Hild. My soul sinks down abash'd : I cannot fight ;
What wou'd you more ? I have confess'd the murder.

St. Val. You have confess'd you know not what :
retire !

Go to your chamber ; I will quickly follow,
And bring you comfort.—Nay, make no reply.
The time is labouring, wondrous things and new
Press to the birth ; prepare yourself to meet them.

[*Excunt severally.*

*Enter MATILDA and her Domestics, DE COURCI and
his Train.*

Mat. My noble lord, thrice welcome ! you are come
To glad the mourner's heart, and with your presence
Make her poor cottage rich.

De Cour. Most noble lady,
Henry of Normandy, the kingly heir
Of England's mighty conqueror, of his grace
And princely courtesy, by me his servant,
As a most loving father, kindly greets you :
Which salutation past, I am to move you
Upon the matter of your suit afresh,
Its weight and circumstance ; how many years
It hath been let to sleep ? what forfeiture
And high default you stand in, shou'd it fail :
Conjuring you, as fits a Christian king,
By the lov'd memory of your honour'd lord,
Who now hath tenanted the silent grave

These twenty years and more, not to proceed
In this high matter on surmise, or charge
Of doubtful circumstance; the crime alledg'd
Being so heinous, the appeal so bloody,
And he whom you attaint so brave and noble.

Mat. I know, my lord, in property the law
Can plead prescription and the time's delay;
But justice, in an inquisition made for blood,
With retrospective eye thro' ages past
Moves her own pace, nor hears the law's demur.—
Why I have let this murder sleep thus long,
Necessity, and not my will, must answer.
The conqueror William, and his furious son,
With iron hand upheld th' oppressor's power,
And stopt their ears against the widow's cries.
In painful silence brooding o'er my grief,
On this lone rock, upon the ocean's brink,
Year after year I languish'd, in my dreams
Conversing oft with shadowy shapes and horrors,
That scar'd me into madness.—Oh, my lord!
Bear with my weakness: pray regard me not;
I have a remedy at hand—my tears. [Weeps.]

De Cour. Sad relict of the bravest, best of men,
Tell not thy griefs to me, nor let my words
(Which by commission, not of choice, I speak)
Shake thy firm purpose; for on England's throne
No tyrant sits, deaf to the widow's cause,
But Heav'n's vicerent, merciful and just.
If stedfast thou art fix'd in thy appeal,
Stedfast in justice is thy sovereign too.

Bring forth thy knight appellant, for the lists
Expect him, and may Heav'n defend the right!

Mat. Thanks to thy royal sender! on my knee
I offer prayers to Heaven for length of days,
And blessings shower'd on his anointed head.—
Now, gallant lord, you shall behold my champion,
My shepherd boy, who, like the son of Jesse,
Unskill'd in arms, must combat this Philistine.—
Montgomeri, come forth!

Enter MONTGOMERI.

De Cour. Is this your knight?

Mat. This is my knight. I trust not in the strength
Of mortal man; Heav'n will uphold my cause,
And to a murderer's heart will guide the blow,
Tho' from an infant's hand.

De Cour. Of what degree
Must I report him? In the royal lists
Against so proud a name as Hildebrand,
The warlike forms of knighthood will demand
That noble shall to noble be oppos'd.

Mat. Not unprepar'd I shall attend the lists,
And at my sovereign's feet prefer the proofs
Which honour's forms demand.

De Cour. You know the peril,
If you fall short.

Mat. I take it on my head.

De Cour. Where have you serv'd? What battles
have you seen?

Mont. Few and unfortunate have been the fields

Where I have fought.—I serv'd a sinking cause ;
Robert of Normandy was my liege lord,
For I am Norman born.

De Cour. Have you been train'd
In tournaments ?

Mont. I never broke a lance,
Nor shall I, as I hope, but in his heart
Who stabb'd Saint Valori.

De Cour. Noble lady,
I wou'd impart something of nearest import
To your more private ear.

Mat. Let all withdraw : *[They withdraw.]*
Leave us.—And now, my lord and honour'd guest,
Impart your noble thoughts ; for sure I am
None others can be native of a soul,
Where courtesy and valour are enshrin'd,
As in a holy altar, under guard
Of consecrated keepers—therefore speak.

De Cour. Let infamy fix on me, when I wrong
A confidence so generous !—Heav'n bestow'd
One friend, the pride and blessing of my life ;
Heav'n, when you lost a husband, from me also
Took that one friend away, and in his grave
Buried my heart beside him.

Mat. Yes, my lord,
We both have cause to mourn him ; I remember
The day he parted for the Holy Wars,
His manly bosom struggling to repress
Its bursting passion, in those racking moments,
When stern religion rent him from my arms,

Then, even then, in his capacious soul
 Friendship had part—you shar'd it with Matilda.
 Need I proceed? ah, no! for you was present,
 You took him from me, on your neck he fell;
 I parted, sunk, and never saw him more.

De Cour. 'Twas in those parting moments he com-
 mitted

A sacred charge, the very test of friendship,
 Your soft unshelter'd beauty to my care.
 I serv'd, consol'd you, lov'd you as a brother;
 But soon Saint Valori call'd me from my charge,
 For war and sickness had consum'd our host,
 And Palestine was drench'd with Christian blood.—
 We fought, we conquer'd, and from Pagan hands
 Rescu'd the captive Cross: and now command
 My zealous heart, you are its mistress still.

Mat. There needs not this, my lord; for I can read
 Your zeal without a preface: freely then,
 As a friend shou'd, and plainly speak your thoughts.

De Cour. When rumour of this combat reach'd my
 ears,

Without delay I sent a trusty page,
 Offering myself as your devoted knight:
 He brought for answer, that you had a champion;
 You thank'd me for my offer;—cold repulse
 Temper'd in courteous phrase! still I submitted
 In silence, as became me, to your pleasure,
 Musing who this might be——

Mat. And now you find him

A stripling youth unknown, in arms a novice,
And you condemn my choice; these are your thoughts.

De Cour. I do confess it.—Oh, reflect in time!
Think not because nature hath cast a form
In fair proportion, strung his youthful joints
With nerves that bear him bounding to the chase,
Or hurl the wrestler in the shouting ring,
That you have train'd a champion to encounter
A combatant so practis'd in the lists,
So valorous in fight as Hildebrand.

Mat. What I have done, I've done: your zeal, my
lord,
May start new terrors for my hero's danger,
Shake me with new alarms, but change it cannot.

De Cour. Turn not away, but still with patience
hear me.

Think what you are, great in yourself, yet greater
As brave Saint Valori's widow: oh, preserve
That name untainted; hear what honour counsels;
Truth makes me bold, your danger is my warrant.

Mat. You was my husband's friend; I own your
plea.

Lo! I am turn'd to hear: proceed.

De Cour. I was his friend,
I am yours also; and as such I warn you
Against a deed so fatal, that the steel
Of Hildebrand gave not a stab more mortal
To life than this to fame.

Mat. My lord, my lord!
You rise too fast upon me, and advance

Too strongly on so weak a disputant,
So much to seek for reason as I am.

De Cour. May I not then demand, what is this boy,
Whom you thus dignify? this page, this lacquey,
The very topmost pitch of whose promotion
Had been to touch the stirrup of Saint Valori?

Mat. What is he!—but you question me too
harshly;

I'll answer to the king; but to a friend
Who treats me with suspicion, I am silent.
You bid me call to memory what I am:
I hope, when thus you school me, you yourself
In your own precepts need no monitor.
I think I am as humble as I shou'd be
Under such hard correction. I acknowledge
Two powerful duties: to my husband one,
The first and strongest; to yourself the next,
As my much-honour'd guest; but I oppose
The tyranny of friendship, which would stamp
Dishonour on the worthy, and forbid
My free affections to direct their choice
Where nature warrants, and my soul approves. [*Exit.*]

De Cour. [*Alone.*] Why then there's no perfection
in the sex,

Or I had found it here. Farewell to grief;
So much for tears! tho' twenty years they flow,
They wear no channels in a widow's cheeks;
And still the ambush'd smile lurks underneath
The watery surface, ready to start up

At the next lover's summons ; now to greet
A hero's passion, now to wed a page.

Enter Saint VALORI.

St. Val. My Lord De Courci, doth your memory
serve

To recollect a certain pledge of love,
A jewel, which the lady of this house
Gave to her husband by your hands ?

De Cour. A bracelet ;

She took it from her arm when they did part :
I well remember it.

St. Val. Was it like this ?

De Cour. The very same ; I gave it to Saint Valori
When he embark'd for Palestine.

St. Val. You did :

I had it then ; your memory is perfect.

De Cour. You had it then !—What must I think of
this ?

St. Val. Can you this little token keep in mind,
And not remember him you gave it to ?

De Cour. Explain yourself ; you speak in mysteries.

St. Val. Be temperate then ; let not your loud sur-
prise

Betray me to the house : I'm here unknown.

De Cour. Impossible ! tho' the dead rose again,
Yet this can not be he.

St. Val. My friend ! my friend !

Come to my arms ! let this embrace convince you.

De Cour. Oh earth and heaven ! he lives.

St. Val. He lives indeed
To a new life of misery. Be still!
Forbear to question me: another time
Thou shalt hear all, but let this hour be sacred
To friendship's pressing call.—My wife! my wife!

De Cour. Oh, my prophetic fears!

St. Val. Unhappy woman!

For why shou'd I accuse her? twenty years
A mournful widow, and at last to start
So wide from all propriety; and now,
After so brave a struggle, now to sink
Her honour, which still bore so proud a sail
Thro' the rough tide of time: oh bitter thought!
Oh aggravating shame!

De Cour. Alas, my friend,
How shall I comfort you? I see you point
At young Montgomeri: in friendship's right
I ask'd her private ear, and boldly urg'd
The peril of her fame.

St. Val. And what reply?

De Cour. Patient at first she heard; but when I
touch'd

The master-string, and set to view how base,
The choice of such a minion, such a page,
Then—but 'twere painful to describe the scene,
Vain to conceal: she loves him to distraction.

St. Val. Can it be doubted? She has married
him.

De Cour. Indeed!

St. Val. I have a trusty servant here,

Who saw her clasp him in her wanton arms,
Twine, like pale ivy round the polish'd bark
Of the smooth beech, whilst rapt'rous she exclaim'd,
' My hero! my Saint Valori! my husband! '—
Oh, she is lost, beyond redemption lost!

De Cour. Who now shall dream of constancy in
woman?

What's to be done?—Your life dissolves the combat.

St. Val. That shame I've sav'd her from: Lord
Hildebrand

Is dying in this house.

De Cour. Lord Hildebrand!

How many strange events are here combin'd
Of sorrow and surprise! so thick they crowd,
So swift they change, I know not where to turn,
Nor what to counsel.

St. Val. What can counsel give?

Can words revoke, can wisdom reconcile,
Th' indissoluble web which fate has wove?
And shall I stay and harbour here with shame?
Walk, like a discontented moping ghost,
To haunt and hover round their nuptial bed,
When I can die, as I have liv'd, in arms?—
Off, holy counterfeit! begone, disguise!

De Cour. Stop, I conjure you: rush not on despair.

St. Val. Despair!—And have I worn the Cross so
long

But as the mask and mockery of religion?
No, 'tis the armour of a Christian knight,
And with this gauntlet I defy despair.

De Cour. Then by that sacred symbol, by our
friendship

And faithful brotherhood in God's holy service,

I do beseech thee to persist in hope :

For whilst one circumstance of doubt remains,

One, tho' the slightest fragment is afloat,

That fond credulity ere clung to, still,

Still will I keep some happy chance in view

To save thy lady's honour.

St. Val. Gallant friend,

Thy counsel shall prevail, I will persist ;

And as misfortune is the world's best school

For true philosophy, I will extract

The cordial patience from the bitter root

Of this implanted pain. Come, brave *De Courci* !

Pleasure's gay scene, and hope's delusive dream,

Are vanish'd, lost ; love's fairy palace sinks

In the false fleeting sand on which 'twas built ;

Whilst thy immortal constancy alone

Stands in the waste, a solitary column,

To tell life's mournful traveller where once

Joy revell'd, and a stately fabric rose. *Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter MATILDA and Lord HILDEBRAND.

Matilda.

STOP, stranger! wherefore have you left your chamber?

Will you go forth with all your wounds about you?

Return, nor rashly counteract our care,

That labours to preserve you.

Hild. Shall I make

Your house a grave? The wounds you see are nothing,

Their pain may be assuag'd by drugs and ointments;

Nature abounds in simples, that can heal

These tumours of the body.

Mat. If the cure

Be, as you say, so easy, why oppose it?

Is pain your choice, that you resist our medicines,

And thus expose your rankling wounds undrest

To the raw fest'ring air?

Hild. Ah, generous lady!

'Tis but a superficial flattering art

To heal the skin, and make the surface whole,

When an unsearchable and mortal sting

Has pierc'd the nobler part.

Mat. That sting is grief:

You mourn a wife, perhaps, or some dear friend,

In your late shipwreck lost: if it be so,

I'll not arraign your sorrow; yet remember,

Tho' short of their allotted time they fell,
'Twas Heav'n that struck them short; they were not
murder'd,

As my Saint Valori, by vile, treach'rous man.

Hild. Oh, horror! horror!

Mat. Have I touch'd the cause?

Was there a friend? a wife?

Hild. Nor wife, nor friend:

And yet——

Mat. What yet? Your heart perhaps was fix'd
Upon your freighted treasures, hoarded up
By carking care, and a long life of thrift,
Now without interest or redemption swallow'd
By the devouring bankrupt waves for ever:
What then? your cares have perish'd with your for-
tune.

Hild. The wreck of friends and fortune I bewail

As things Heav'n gives and takes away at pleasure;

Conditional enjoyments, transient loans,

Bliss that accumulates a debt of pain:

Swift their succession, sudden their reverse.

To-day the setting sun descends in tears,

To-morrow's dawn breaks forth, and all is joy:

But guilt involves me in perpetual night;

No morning star, no glimmering ray of hope;

Eternal tossings on a bed of thorns,

Conscience, that raven, knelling in my ear,

And vulture furies plucking at my heart!

Mat. Then I conjectur'd right, and 'tis remorse

Which tortures you; I read it in your eyes.

Did that descending virtue come on earth,
To set at large the captive or the free ?
'Twas to redeem the captive : turn to him,
Turn then, and seek your saving hope, repentance ;
Go to your Carmelite, confess to him,
Fly to your soul's physician for a cure ;
Whether with soft emollients he assuage,
Or with corrosive penances consume
The cank'rous gangrene that now gnaws your heart.

Hild. I have confess'd to him, he knows my guilt ;
But what can he, alas ! there lives but one
Under Heav'n's canopy, who can absolve.——
Hither th' immediate hand of Heav'n has led me,
Hopeless of pardon, to expire before you,
And cast your husband's murderer at your feet.

Mat. Ah, scorpion ! is it thou ? I shake with horror.——

Thee have I pitied ? thee have I preserv'd ?——
Monster, avaunt ! Go to the rocks for food,
Call to the winds for pity ! lay thee down
Beneath some blighted yew, whose pois'nous leaf
Kills as it falls ; there howl thyself to death !——
Hangs the roof o'er us yet ? I am astonish'd.——
Art not asham'd, O earth, to bear him yet ?
O sea, to cast him up again ?——Begone !

Hild. I do not wait for pardon, but for death :
Call to your servants ; whelm me with their swords.
Heav'n throws me on your mercy ; you receiv'd
And gave me shelter ; hospitably tender'd
Food and restoring med'cines ; I refus'd them :

My thirst is unallay'd, my wounds undrest,
No particle of food has past my lips,
For I disdain a fraud upon your pity;
And, where I can't have pardon, scorn support.
The only mercy I implore is death.

Mat. Mercy! and dare thy tongue pronounce the
name? —

Mercy! thou man of blood, thou hast destroy'd it.
It came from Heaven to save Saint Valori:
You saw the cherub messenger alight
From its descent; with outspread wings it sate,
Covering his breast; you drew your cursed steel,
And thro' the pleading angel pierc'd his heart.
Then, then the moon, by whose pale light you struck,
Turn'd fiery red, and from her angry orb
Darted contagious sickness on the earth;
The planets in their courses shriek'd for horror;
Heav'n dropt maternal tears.—Oh! art thou come?

Enter MONTGOMERI.

Mont. Why dost thou tremble? Why this ghastly
terror?

Mat. Save me, support me! In thy arms I fall:
I mov'd not till thou cam'st, lest I had sunk
Upon the floor, and catching at the hand
That stabb'd Saint Valori, his touch had kill'd me.

Mont. That stabb'd Saint Valori! Is this the wretch?
Is Hildebrand before me?—Draw, thou traitor!
Stand to defence, or die!

Hild. Behold my heart!
Strike! I expect no mercy.

Mat. Stop thine hand:
Black tho' he be, as infamy can make him,
He is defenceless, wounded, and expiring.

Hild. Wilt thou not add, repentant?—I am van-
quish'd,
Body and soul laid prostrate by despair.
I do confess my crime: what can I more?
Castle, demesne, and treasure, all the spoils
Of my accursed avarice, I resign:
Take my life too; dismiss me from a world
Where I have none to mourn me, no kind hand
To close my eyes; of children, wife, and friends,
(Save only this poor Carmelite) bereft;
Be merciful to him, he is not guilty.
If I dare ask a little earth to cover me
For Christian decency, I would—but that,
That were too much—my tears will sink a grave.

Mont. He's deeply penitent: you'll not refuse
What he petitions for: 'twere most unchristian
To let him die without the church's rites.

Mat. Forbear!

Mont. He's dying—see, he faints—he falls.

[*Hildebrand sinks on the ground.*]

'Twill give him comfort in the hour of death;
And that I'd give ev'n to a murderer.

Mat. You never knew your father, and in you
Pity is natural; in me 'tis treason

To breathe the air which his pollution taints;
A crime to look upon his eyes and live.

Mont. I feel, I feel your cause; there let him fall:
Die where he lists, but give his corpse a grave.—
And see, the Carmelite approaches.

Mat. Hah!

The Lord De Courci too!—Stand by the body;
And if the wretch has breath to speak again,
Call them to witness his confession. Mark!
In Heav'n's own presence, mark this awful scene,
And write it on thy heart!—Farewell! Be constant!
[Exit Matilda.

Enter SAINT VALORI and DE COURCI.

Mont. Noble De Courci, and thou reverend father,
From whom the penitent in life's last hour
Draws holy comfort, look upon that wretch,
Visit his soul with peace at its departure,
And take confession from his dying lips.

St. Val. Withdraw, and stand apart then out of
hearing. [They withdraw.

Lord Hildebrand, if thou hast sense and motion,
Reach forth thine hand!—So! If thou canst, look
up!

I am the Carmelite.

Hild. Oh, save me, save me!

I am a sinful man.

St. Val. But not a murderer:

He who speaks to you is Saint Valori.

Hild. God of my hope! is it some blessed spirit,
Or living man that speaks?

St. Val. A living man,
Saint Valori, himself; no spirit.—Mark!
I grasp your hand in token of forgiveness:
Dost thou perceive it?

Hild. At my heart I feel it.—
Can you forgive me? May I die in peace?

St. Val. Lo! thus with friendly hand I close thine
eyes:

Sleep, sleep! and be at rest from thy afflictions;
Wou'd mine were laid beside thee in the grave!

Hild. Oh, balmy comfort! oh, how sweet to die!—
Farewell for ever: do not quit my hand;
Let it not go, till I am dead.—Farewell! [*Dies.*]

St. Val. He's dead;—his soul forsook him with that
sigh.

Now, sirs, return—'tis past; I have beheld
Religion's triumph, a repentant death.

Re-enter DE COURCI and MONTGOMERI.

Call to your servants, and remove the body.

Mont. There is a charitable house hard by,
Where on the ocean's edge a few poor monks,
A slender brotherhood of Mercy, dwell;
For human misery is a small asylum;
There often from the foundering bark escap'd,
The houseless wretch finds shelter, and his wounds,
With balsams by the fathers cull'd, are dress'd:
There we'll entomb the body.

St. Val. Be it so !

Mont. You now alone survive the morning's wreck :
You by peculiar providence are sav'd
From a devoted vessel, which the sins
Of its dire owner sunk ; still I must wonder
How God's own servant with a dæmon leagu'd,
And piety with murder cou'd embark.

St. Val. You think he was a murderer ; have a care
How you incline too rashly to such tales.
Let not your vassals triumph and rejoice
Too much o' th' sudden ; let your castle keep
Some remnant of its old propriety :
And you, the champion, hang not up your lance
In token of a bloodless victory,
But keep it sharpen'd for a fresh encounter ;
And stick your valour to the test, young knight,
Lest haply some new questioner should come,
And dash your feast with horror.

Mont. Reverend stranger,
It will become your order to desist
From threats, which cover some mysterious meaning,
And speak without disguise. You boast yourself
Noble Saint Valori's friend, yet plead the cause
Of Hildebrand, defend him from the crime
Of murder, and with gloomy menace bid me
Expect some new appellant.—Lo ! I'm ready.

St. Val. Away, vain boy, away !

Mont. Vain let me be,
Not of myself, but of the cause I stand for :
The lady of Saint Valori accounts me

Worthy to be her champion, by that title
I do impeach the memory of Lord Hildebrand;
And in the presence of this lord, whose person
Stands for the king, arraign him as a murderer:
If any loves his memory so well
As to adopt his cause, let him stand forth,
I pledge myself to answer.

St. Val. Lord De Courci,
Shall I reveal myself? I'm strongly tempted. [*Aside.*

De Cour. I do protest against it; and conjure you,
Whilst he is thus in train, leave it to me
To draw confession up.

St. Val. I am content.

De Cour. Montgomeri, in virtue of my charge
I've noted your defiance: should there come
A knight of known degree to challenge it,
Say, by what stile and title wilt thou answer?

Mont. Ask that of her in whose defence I stand.

De Cour. We know thee for her champion; but
declare,

Hast thou no nearer name, no closer tie?

St. Val. Answer to that.—'Tis palpable, 'tis gross:
Your silence is confession.

Mont. Ah, good father,
Have you so us'd confession as an engine
To twist and torture silence to your purpose,
And stain the truth with colouring not its own?

St. Val. The man who flies to silence for evasion,
When plainly question'd, aims at a deception
Which candour's self will construe to condemn him.

Mont. Thyself a stranger, dark, inscrutable,
With Hildebrand associate, thou to question me!—
First answer for thyself.

St. Val. For myself then——

De Cour. Stop, recollect your thoughts!

St. Val. Thanks, noble lord!—

For myself, then, I own I am your debtor
For no less gift than life; and tho' that life
Makes what you gave a gift of misery,
Yet is the gift uncancell'd.

Mont. Set it down
For nothing but the mutual debt of nature,
Common from man to man.—To-morrow's sun,
With favouring winds to aid us, shall transport
This castle's noble mistress and myself
Across the streight that severs this fair isle
From its maternal shore; there to renew
At Henry's feet, against this bloody man
Newly deceas'd, our criminal appeal,
Arraigning him for murder.

St. Val. Hah! beware!

Mont. Who shall oppose it?

St. Val. I; this noble witness!
Truth, and the living evidence of sight.

Mont. To you, my Lord De Courci, not to him,
Who is a son of peace, to you, a knight
Seal'd with the Cross, and militant for truth,
Thus I appeal.—What say you to our charge?

De Cour. False, false; I pledge my life upon the
proof.

Mont. Hah ! by my father's soul, if thou shalt dare
To whisper that to-morrow—

De Cour. If I dare
To whisper it!—My herald shall proclaim it ;
I'll cry it in the lists.—There is my gauntlet.

[*Throws it down.*]

St. Val. Hold, I forbid it—

[*Takes up De Courci's gauntlet.*]

Brother of the Cross,
Upon your knightly honour I conjure you
Put up your gauntlet : I revoke the combat.—
Hear me, young sir, you tread upon your grave ;
Fate waves the sword of vengeance o'er your head ;
I've pass'd it by, and paid you life for life.
Lo ! I provoke you to a gentler combat ;
Behold my peaceful gauntlet!—Take this jewel,
[*Gives the bracelet.*]

And an hour hence, when I am on my way,
Shew it to her (what shall I call your lady?)
To her that own'd it once.

Mont. I will obey you.

What more have you in mind?

St. Val. Tell her the monk,
Thro' all his pilgrimage from Holy Land
Preserv'd it sacred ; journeying night and day,
By sea, by land, in shipwreck, in the waves,
Still guarded it with reverence more devout
Than holy relicks of departed martyrs.
Now 'tis no longer worth : 'tis hers, 'tis yours,
'Tis the next favourite's prize, a transient bauble,

The fleeting emblem of a woman's love.—
No more: farewell!—Come, gallant lord, to horse!

[Exit with De Courci.]

Mont. To horse! why so a warrior would have
call'd;

With such a step a warrior would have trod:

A monk!—Mysterious man! I'll not believe it.

This jewel may unfold the labyrinth—

What then? shall I commit the clue

To sorrow's trembling hand, or firmly hold it

Till more shall be discover'd?—Time direct me!

[Exit.]

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Chapel with an Altar decorated with the funeral Trophies of SAINT VALORI. MATILDA is discovered kneeling on the Altar. MONTGOMERI enters, and, after a Pause, speaks.

Montgomeri.

STILL at the altar! Ever on her knees—

Nothing but peace! peace to her husband's soul!

Perpetual requiems.—If, as we believe,

Th' uncircumscribed spirit of a man

Walks after death, till it can find a grave,

Or holy church, with soul-compelling hymns,

Shall chant it to repose, I am amaz'd

My father's ghost, whilst unappeas'd by prayer,
Ne'er took it's shadowy journey to this spot:
Why, when De Courci and the monk outfac'd me,
Did he not then arise with all his wounds,
And scare them to confession ? I am lost,
Bewilder'd, and perplex'd ! But see ! she moves—

[*Matilda arises, and comes down from the altar to
Montgomeri.*]

Mat. My son ! my joy ! my blessing !

Mont. Whence is this ?

What sudden transformation ? By my hopes,
There is a joyful emanation round thee,
That strikes a gleam of rapture to my heart.—
What angel of good tidings hath been with thee ?
Who hath exorcis'd thy despair, and breath'd
This beam of placid pleasure in thine eyes ?

Mat. Thy father hath been with me.

Mont. Heav'ns ! my father !

Mat. I've seen him in my vision ; commun'd with
him

Before the altar : soft his accents fell,
Like voices of departed friends heard in our dreams,
Or music in the air, when the night-spirits
Warble their magic minstrelsy.

Mont. Indeed !

Wou'd I had seen him too !

Mat. Wou'd to Heav'n thou hadst !

Mont. What was his form ?

Mat. Majestically sweet

He smil'd upon me; strait thro' all my veins] |
Methought I felt a thrilling virtue run,
Healing, where'er it cours'd, both heart and brain.

Mont. Saw you no wounds about him?

Mat. None, no wounds;
Nor was he in his youth, as when he died,
But grey with years, and much transform'd by time:
At first I knew him not, and as he spoke
So chang'd methought he was, with pain I trac'd
The faded record.

Mont. Spoke he of murder?

Mat. Oh! not a word; but as it ne'er had been,
And he were living now, so look'd and spoke.

Mont. 'Tis strange!—One question more—Say, did
this form

Ne'er visit you before?

Mat. Never, till now.

Mont. Nor this, nor any other shape?

Mat. Oh! never, never.

Mont. Then, then I own my confidence is shaken;
And fit it is no longer to conceal
What I have newly heard so boldly vouch'd,
That my faith reels.

Mat. Speak, I conjure thee, speak!

Mont. I came this instant from the Carmelite
And Lord De Courci: on the floor was stretch'd
The breathless corpse of Hildebrand; the monk
In his last moments had been private with him:
I urg'd the murder, to his own confession
Appealing in my accusation's proof;

When, strange to tell! his confessor the monk
Boldly denied that he had kill'd Saint Valori.
Rous'd at this daring insult, and indignant,
I turn'd upon De Courci, and demanded
If he wou'd vouch the falsehood: he, more hot
And no less confident than t' other, hurl'd
Defiance in my teeth, and to the ground
Threw down his gauntlet, pledging to the truth
Of what the monk affirm'd.

Mat. I am amaz'd;
There is a trembling expectation in me,
That by some secret impulse draws me on
To the great revelation of my fate:
Therefore, proceed!

Mont. Before I could reply,
The Carmelite had seiz'd De Courci's pledge,
And with a tone and gesture more beseeching
A haughty warrior than a son of peace,
Sternly forbade the challenge to proceed:
Then with a mournful action turning tow'ards me,
And sighing, drew from forth his bosom this,
This pearly chain. *[Produces the bracelet.]*

Mat. Ah!—Do my eyes betray me?—
Help, help! uphold me, whilst I look upon it.—
The same; the same! I gave it to my husband;
My last, fond, 'parting pledge: guide, guide my
hands,
My trembling hands to touch it.—Sacred relic!
Enthusiastic as the pilgrim's kiss,
Thus to my lips I press thee. Hail, thrice hail!—
I

To thee, O altar, with these banners deck'd,
Hallow'd with daily incense, and besieg'd
With never-ceasing requiems for his soul,
I dedicate this trophy of my love!—
Lead me, my son!

Mont. Oh! dost thou love thy son?

Mat. Love thee! O Heaven!

[Falls on his neck weeping.]

Mont. By that then I conjure thee.
Come to thy couch! Now, as thy cheek turns pale,
Convulsion shakes thy lip, and the full stream
Bursts from thine eyes, return not to the altar:
Let me conduct thee forth.

Mat. Where, where's the monk?
Shall I not see him?

Mont. Yes, thou suffering saint!
Be patient for a while, and thou shalt see him.

Mat. Come then, dispose of me as to thy love
And piety seems best: I will obey.
Let me have this—Thou wilt not take this from me.

[Holding the bracelet.]

Mont. Not for the worth of all this world.

Mat. I thank thee. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter SAINT VALORI, DE COURCI, and GYFFORD.

St. Val. Suffer this last one weakness.—Hah! she's
gone;

The chapel is deserted: I had hop'd
Once more to have look'd upon her ere we parted.

De Cour. 'Tis better as it is.

St. Val. It may be so;
And yet 'twere stern philosophy, methinks,
That could refuse the sight one short indulgence,
Ere the heart breaks with sorrow.

De Cour. I am pain'd
To see this tender sorrow swell so fast.

St. Val. Oh! call to mind how I have lov'd this
woman!

Gyfford, thou know'st it: say, thou faithful servant,
What was my passion; how did absence feed it?
But how canst thou compute my sum of sorrows?
Years upon years have roll'd since thou wast with me:
Time hath been wearied with my groans, my tears
Have damp'd his wings, till he scarce crept along;
The un pitying sun ne'er wink'd upon my toils;
All day I dragg'd my slavery's chain, all night
Howl'd to its clanking on my bed of straw;
And yet these pains were recreation now,
To those I feel, whilst I resign Matilda.

Gyf. Stay then, my noble master, here abide,
And to this awful place convoke your lady.

St. Val. This awful place! she'll visit it no more;
Or, if she does, 'twill be to strip these trappings;
These mockeries shall come down, they've had their
day,

They've serv'd the uses of hypocrisy,
And festive garlands now shall fill their place
Around this nuptial altar.

De Cour. No, my friend,
I am a witness to her unfeign'd sorrows;

And were I left to judge of them unbiass'd
By what I saw besides, I should believe
She were the very mirror of her sex
For matchless constancy.

St. Val. You rend my heart.

Gyf. Thrice on her knees this morning hath she
wash'd

This altar's feet with tears, and with her prayers
Sent up a mingled cry of sighs and groans.

St. Val. Why then, old man, didst thou distract
my soul

With gossip tales to slander her fair fame,
And murder my repose? If thou art conscious
Of having wrong'd her, get thee hence, begone!
Fall at her feet for pardon, howl for pity,
And hide thyself where light may never find thee.

Gyf. With grief, but not with shame, I will retire
From thee and light.—I have not wrong'd the truth.

St. Val. Stay, Gyfford, stay, thou loyal, good old
man!

Pity thy master, and forgive my phrenzy.
Lo! I am calm again: the pledge I've given
To young Montgomeri shall be the test:
Yes, with that chain I'll draw her to the proof;
Link'd and entwin'd about her heart—I'll hold it,
And tent her nature to its inmost feelings.—
See, the young favourite comes!

Enter MONTGOMERI.

Mont. Oh! timely found,

G ij

Well are you thus encounter'd, holy sir !
The lady of Saint Valori demands you ;
And lo ! where she advances.

Enter MATILDA.

Mat. Hah ! 'tis well.

In presence of this altar we are met :
And may the sacred genius of the place
Prosper our interview !

St. Val. Amen ! amen !

Mat. Good friends, withdraw ! let none approach
the chapel

Whilst we are private.—Now be firm, my heart !

[They go out—she pauses some time, and then addresses herself to Saint Valori.]

Father, I thank you !—I've receiv'd your pledge,
The small, but prizeless relic you have brought me.
The bracelet, given by Lord De Courci's hands
In times long past (fie, fie upon these tears,
They will have way !) to a departed friend.
Perhaps he priz'd this trifle—but alas !
'Tis fated, like the arm from which 'twas taken,
Never to clasp him more.

St. Val. Alas ! I fear it.

Mat. I hope De Courci gave it to my lord.

St. Val. He did : I saw him give it.

Mat. Hah ! you saw him !

St. Val. When he embark'd for Palestine ; I've
told you

We never march'd apart. I wore the Cross
In those fame-seeking days.

Mat. I do remember.—

And this poor favour, did my hero wear it?

St. Val. Devoutly, at his heart.

Mat. Then, then indeed

Thou hast bestow'd a treasure.—Welcome, welcome!

[As she is pressing it to her heart, St. Valori, observing her agitation, runs to her assistance.]

St. Val. He wore it like an amulet; with this
Before his heart, first thro' the yawning breach
Thy sacred walls, Jerusalem, he storm'd;
Tore down the moony standard, where it hung
In impious triumph; thrice their Pagan swords
Shiver'd his mailed crest, as many times
That sacred amulet was dy'd in blood
Nearest his heart.

Mat. Stop there! I charge thee, stop!
Tell me no more: oh, follow him no further,
For see, th' accursed Pyrenæans rise,
Streaming with blood; there hellish murder howls;
There madness rages, and with haggard eyes
Glares in the craggy pass!—She'll spring upon me
If I advance. Oh, shield me from the sight!

St. Val. Be calm, collect thyself: it was not there,
It was not there Saint Valori met his death.
'Twas not the sword of Hildebrand that slew him;
Tho' pierc'd with wounds, that ambush he surviv'd.

Mat. What do I hear? Oh, look upon this altar!
Think where you stand, and do not wrong the truth.

St. Val. He, who is truth itself, be witness for me!
Deep was the stroke that dire assassin gave,
Yet short of life it stopt; unhors'd and fall'n,
Welt'ring in blood, your wounded husband lay,
'Till haply found by charitable strangers
Journeying to Venice, he was heal'd, restor'd;
And, thence embarking, by a barbarous rover
Was captur'd.—Start not; but repress your terrors.

Mat. Admire not that I tremble; marvel rather
That I hear this and live.—Saint Valori captur'd!
The bravest captain of the Cross enslav'd
By barbarous Pagans!

St. Val. Tedious years he suffer'd
Of hard captivity——

Mat. Oh, where, ye heavens!
Where was your justice then?—And died he there?

St. Val. 'Twas not his lot to find a distant grave.

Mat. Where, where?—Oh, speak! release me from
the rack!——

Where did my hero fall?

St. Val. Where did he fall!——

Nor Pagan swords, nor slavery's galling chain,
Nor murderers' daggers, Afric's burning clime,
Toils, storms, nor shipwreck, kill'd him—here he
fell!

Grief burst his heart—here in this spot he fell!

[*He falls to the ground.*]

Mat. Ah, horror, horror!——Help, for mercy,
help!

My son, my son! your father lies before you.

MONTGOMERI *runs in, followed by* DE COURCI *and* GYFFORD.

Mont. My father! Heav'n and earth! Oh, save him; save him!

Where shall I turn? See, see! she faints, she falls!
[*Supports her in his arms.*]

De Cour. He is her son. Awake, look up, my friend! Live, live! De Courci bids Saint Valori live. Your rival is your son.

[*Saint Valori raising himself on his knee, unsheaths his dagger.*]

St. Val. Off! give me way:
I'll kill him in her arms.

De Cour. He is your son——
Hear me, thou frantic father! I, De Courci,
I speak to you.—Would you destroy your son?

St. Val. Bind up his wounds. Oh, if I've slain my son,
Perdition will not own me!

Mont. He revives.
Nature awakens reason.—Hush! be still.
She stirs.—Withhold him from her arms awhile;
Let all be silence, whilst disposing Heaven,
That showers this joy, shall fit them to receive it.

Mat. How could you say my husband is alive?
Which of you keeps him from me?—Oh! 'tis cruel!

St. Val. Uncase me of my weeds; tear off my cowl!
Now, now she'll know me; now I am Saint Valori.

[*Throws off his habit, and appears in armour.*]

Mat. Stand off! Oh, blessed light of Heav'n, shine forth!

Visit my aching eyes, ye solar beams,
And let me see my hero!—Hah! the Cross—
He gleams—he glimmers;—like a mist he rises.—
He lives! he lives! I clasp him in my arms.
My lost Saint Valori! my long-lost husband!

[*Runs into his arms.*]

St. Val. Oh, my heart's joy! do I again embrace thee?

Soul of all honour, constancy, and truth!

Mat. This transport is too quick, it melts my brain;
The sky runs round; the earth is all in motion;
Nay, now it whirls too fast.

St. Val. Ye saints in bliss!
Heroic matrons! Ye angelic virtues,
Protect your fair resemblance!—Hah! she weeps!—
Kind tears, I thank you! Nature's soft relief,
Waters, that from the soul's full fount run o'er,
To joy or grief welcome alike ye flow,
Assist our patience, and assuage our pain.

Mat. Alas! alas! that I shou'd know thee not.—
What ravages have time and sorrow made
In Heav'n's most perfect work, the fairest temple
Nature e'er rear'd in majesty and grace!

St. Val. What dire calamity have we escap'd!
Now 'tis dispers'd, the mists of doubt are fled;
Truth, like the sun, breaks forth, and all is joy.—
My son! my son! Oh, throw my arms about him,
And let me cling for ever to his neck!

Mont. Oh sympathetic energy of nature !
This morn a nameless orphan, now the son
Of living parents : he for virtue fam'd,
For dignity of soul, and matchless courage ;
She for affection, constancy renown'd,
Inspir'd with truth, with every grace adorn'd,
A woman's fondness, and an angel's face.

Mat. Heaven hear my praises ! echo them, O earth !
Cherubs, that come with healing on your wings,
Waft my thanksgiving back !——Bright beam of
mercy !

Visit the inmost chambers of my heart ;
And where grief rear'd a husband's monument
Fix now his living image : there, as time
Shook not the faithful witness from my soul,
When grief assail'd it, so in joy support me,
And guard my constancy in both extremes.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

EPILOGUE.

BY THE AUTHOR.

Spoken by Mrs. SIDDONS.

LADIES, we now have shewn a faithful wife,
And trust our scene prevails in real life;
We hope that nuptial truth's your reigning passion,
If not—why let the stage begin the fashion :
'Tis ours to paint you innocent and true;
To be what we describe depends on you.—
Two tragic masters grac'd th' Athenian stage,
One sketch'd with candour, t'other dash'd with rage :
Old Sophocles's dames were heavenly creatures,
His rival drew them all in fury features;
Both err'd, perhaps.—The milder urg'd this plea,
“ I paint my women as they ought to be :”
The angry bard, relentless to the Fair,
Sternly replied, “ I paint mine as they are.”

Our Author (pardon if he brings his name
Too near to those of an immortal fame)
At humble distance takes the milder plan,
Less proud to be a poet than a man :
Scorns first to forge and then enforce a crime,
Or polish libels into truth by rhyme.

*If you have faults, alas! he bids me say,
Oh! that his wish cou'd charm them all away!
For if no cure but caustics can be found,
He will not make a sore to heal a wound;
If you have faults, they're faults he won't discover,
To your own sex he begs to bind you over.
So many ladies now there are who write,
You'll hear of all your trips some winter's night:
Since Pegasus has learn'd the jadish trick
To bear a side-saddle, you'll find him kick.*

*But let no satyrist touch my lips with gall,
Lips, from which none but grateful words shall fall.
Can I forget?—But I must here be dumb,
So vast my debt, I cannot count the sum;
Words would but fail me, and I claim no art,
I boast no eloquence—but of the heart.*



If you have faults, what! he told me says
 that his wife says & claims them all away!
 If no cure but cures can be found,
 he will not make a note to find a wound;
 If you have faults, they're faults he won't discover,
 in your own sex he likes to find a lover;
 many ladies now there are who write,
 full heart of all your faults some night;
 since I cannot find a fault in you,
 I bear a life-long love to you.

But let no servant touch my life with gall,
 from which you find the seeds of trouble shall fall;
 for you I live—But I will love to death;
 to rest my debt, I cannot count the cost;
 I will be true to you, and I will love you,
 I will be true to you, and I will love you.

